

December 17, 2012

Dear Pembina Trails Community,

We are all deeply saddened by the horrific shooting that happened on Friday at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. This tragedy hits even closer to home as one of the young victims was a former student at Linden Christian School and Whyte Ridge resident. In the days to come, it is only natural for children to have questions or even concerns about what took place. Here are some tips to make that discussion easier...

What Parents and Educators Can Do:

1. Maintain a "normal" routine. To the extent possible stick to your routine for meals, homework, chores, bedtime, etc., but don't be inflexible.
2. Make time to talk with your children. Remember if you do not talk to your children about this incident someone else will. Take some time and determine what you wish to say.
3. Reassure your children that everything will be okay. Try to help them understand what has happened, keeping in mind their developmental level.
4. Reading or playing quiet games with your children before bed can be helpful. These activities are calming, foster a sense of closeness and security, and reinforce a sense of normalcy. Spend more time tucking them in. Let them sleep with a light on if they ask for it.
5. Make sure your children get appropriate sleep, exercise, and nutrition.
6. If your children express the desire to be helpful or show compassion encourage them to write a poem, or draw a picture to help them express their feelings and feel that they are somehow being supportive.

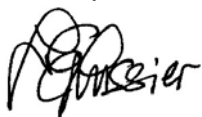
For more information please go to the US National Association of Psychologists www.nasponline.org

Another website that might be helpful for both teachers and parents...
www.schoolmentalhealth.org

At Pembina Trails School Division we have resources in place to ensure our students feel comfortable and safe. Please contact your school student support team, divisional psychologist or social worker if you feel your child requires additional help.

Our thoughts are with the community of Newtown and the families of Sandy Hook Elementary during this difficult time.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Lussier
Superintendent of Education